

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-05

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SAJ-01 DODE-00 NSC-05 H-02 SAM-01 /066 W

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R 031723Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4835

INFO USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

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AMEMBASSY OSLO

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AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

USCINCEUR

CINCUSAFE

CINCUSAREUR

USNMR SHAPE

CINCUSNAVEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MADRID 1663

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NATO, MARR, SP

SUBJ: SPAIN AND NATO--THE NEED TO SELL NATO TO THE SPANISH

SUMMARY: FOCUSING ON THE PROBLEM OF GETTING ULTIMATE ALLIED
AGREEMENT TO SPANISH MEMBERSHIP IN NATO MAY HAVE DISTRACTED

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ATTENTION FROM THE ALSO REAL PROBLEM OF ASSURING A POSITIVE

SPANISH DECISION ONCE THAT INVITATION TO JOIN CAN BE EXTENDED. SOME ESTABLISHMENT SPANIARDS, MOST NOTABLY IN CONSERVATIVE AND ARMY CIRCLES, ARE CONCERNED THAT THE ECONOMIC COSTS TO SPAIN AND THE REORIENTATION OF SPANISH DEFENSE POLICY INVOLVED MIGHT MAKE THE PRICE OF MEMBERSHIP TOO HIGH. FOR THE SPANISH MILITARY IN GENERAL, THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW TREATY WILL BE IMPORTANT IN DETERMINING THEIR ULTIMATE STANCE ON NATO MEMBERSHIP. PERHAPS AS IMPORTANT AS ANY OTHER SINGLE FACTOR IN THIS RESPECT MAY BE THE SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF THE MILITARY PLANNING PROCESS CALLED FOR IN THE TREATY. END SUMMARY.

1. SINCE THE ADVENT OF THIS NEW SPANISH GOVT, WE HAVE BEEN TREATED TO MORE PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY GOVT LEADERS ON THE POSSIBILITY OF SPANISH MEMBERSHIP IN NATO THAN AT ANY OTHER TIME IN RECENT MEMORY. ALMOST ALL THESE STATEMENTS HAVE HEDGED--AND THIS INCLUDES THE PRIME MINISTER'S MAJOR POLICY STATEMENT ON JAN 28. FOREIGN MINISTER AREILZA, WHOM WE BELIEVE TO BE A FIRM ADVOCATE OF SPANISH MEMBERSHIP IN NATO, HAS YET TO SPEAK FORTHRIGHTLY IN PUBLIC ON THIS ISSUE. MEETING THE PRESS WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER AFTER THE TREATY SIGNING ON JAN 24, AREILZA STATED, "--- WE HAVE NEVER ASKED FOR ENTRANCE... IT WILL BE A QUESTION TO BE DECIDED BY THE GOVT AT THAT TIME...WE ARE INTERESTED BECAUSE I UNDERSTAND THAT NATO IS EQUIVALENT TO THE MILITARY AND STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE WHICH UNDERLINES THE EEC, OF WHICH WE WOULD LIKE TO BECOME MEMBERS." ON HIS MORE RECENT TRIP TO BRUSSELS, AREILZA TOLD SPANISH JOURNALIST FEB 18, "...THE GOVT HAS NOT DECIDED ON THIS YET. THERE ARE MANY PROBLEMS, INCLUDING ECONOMIC ONES... OUR INTEGRATION INTO THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE MAY BE A WISH OF SOME, BUT NOT ALL, MEMBERS OF THE GOVT..."

2. THE SUM OF AREILZA'S PUBLIC STATEMENTS (OF WHICH THERE HAVE BEEN OTHERS AS WELL) CLEARLY INDICATES TO US THAT THERE ARE DOMESTIC RESTRAINTS ON HIS ANNOUNCING CLEARLY FOR MEMBERSHIP AND THAT THESE GO BEYOND ANY RETICENCE BASED ON THE ABSENCE OF AN INVITATION. SOME OF THIS OPPOSITION COMES FROM THE LEFT. PLAYING ON THIS, THE COMMUNISTS (PCE) STRESS THE LINE THAT SPANISH MEMBERSHIP WOULD BE DESTABILIZING IN THE MEDITERRANEAN. MORE IMMEDIATELY SIGNIFICANT IS THE OPPOSITION WITHIN THE SPANISH ESTABLISHMENT--NOTABLY AMONG ARCHCONSERVATIVES OF THE FRANCO ERA, WHOSE FUTURE PROSPECTS VERY MUCH DEPEND ON SPANISH ISOLATION, AND

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WITHIN THE SPANISH ARMY LEADERSHIP. IN A PRESS INTERVIEW ON FEB 8, ARMY MINISTER ALVAREZ-ARENAS ALLOWED THAT SPAIN IS VERY MUCH A PART OF EUROPE BUT TERMED THE NATO MEMBERSHIP QUESTION NOT URGENT. HE SAID THAT IS WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO SAY WHETHER IT WOULD BE MORE ADVANTAGEOUS FOR SPAIN TO JOIN OR NOT AND THAT HE PREFERRED TO WAIT FOR NATO'S INVITATION RATHER THAN TO SOLICIT MEMBERSHIP. IN IDENTIFYING SPAIN'S ENEMIES AS INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM, INTERNATIONAL FREEMASONRY AND THE "SEEKERS OF REVENGE,"

HE EFFECTIVELY REAFFIRMED THE ARMY'S PRINCIPAL FOCUS AS THAT OF
INTERNAL SUBVERSION. EVEN THE MUCH MORE LIBERAL ARMY LT. GEN.
DIAZ ALEGRIA (JUST APPOINTED AMBASSADOR TO CAIRO), WHO IS AN
ADVOCATE OF MILITARY REFORM, SAID IN EARLY FEB THAT "...ENTRY
INTO NATO IS A COMPLICATED ORGANIZATIONAL AND, ABOVE ALL,
ECONOMIC PROBLEM...TREATIES WITH THE UNITED STATES COULD BE VERY
USEFUL AND ALMOST SUFFICIENT IF FULFILLED."

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3. IN SOME CONTRAST, AIR MINISTER FRANCO WAS RECENTLY QUOTED AS STATING THE SPANISH AIR FORCE IS "ABLE TO ENTER AND COLLABORATE WITH OTHER NATO FORCES." NAVY MINISTER PITA DA VIEGA TOLD THE PRESS IN LATE JAN THAT SPAIN IS ALREADY WITHIN THE NATO GEO-GRAPHIC AREA AND "FOR OUR OWN SECURITY, I CONSIDER MEMBERSHIP CONVENIENT--OR AT LEAST INTEGRATION OF OUR DEFENSE PLANS WITH CONFIDENTIAL

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THOSE OF NATO THROUGH A SPANISH-US RELATIONSHIP..." HE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT SPAIN'S DEFENSE EXPENDITURES PER CAPITA TODAY ARE LESS THAN 1/3 OF THE NATO AVERAGE.

4. SUCH COMMENTS BY SPANISH MILITARY LEADERS REINFORCE OUR OWN ASSESSMENT THAT THE SPANISH NAVY LEADERSHIP IS CURRENTLY FAVORABLE TOWARD MEMBERSHIP (BELIEVING THAT ONLY MINOR ADJUSTMENTS WOULD BE REQUIRED OF IT), THAT THE AIR FORCE LEADERSHIP IS ON BALANCE IN FAVOR, AND THAT THERE ARE CONSIDERABLE SECTORS OF THE SPANISH ARMY DOUBTFUL ABOUT NATO MEMBERSHIP.

5. THE PUBLIC ARGUMENTS AGAINST SPANISH MEMBERSHIP IN KNATO INCLUDE: THE ATTITUDE TOWARD SPAIN OF SOME NATO MEMBERS, THE ECONOMIC COSTS, THE LOSS OF THE OPTIONS OF NEUTRALITY AND CLOSER RELATIONS WITH THE ARAB STATES, THE MILITARY RISK TO SPAIN, THE POTENTIAL DESTABILIZATION OF THE SITUATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, THE DECLINING STATE OF NATO IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AND THE DISINTEREST OF NORTHERN NATO MEMBERS IN MEDITERRANEAN PROBLEMS, AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST, GIBRALTAR. BALANCED AGAINST THESE ARE THE OBVIOUS ADVANTAGES TO SPAIN OF PARTICIPATION IN THE COUNCILS OF EUROPE AND THE ATLANTIC. IN PRIVATE, AREILZA AND OTHERS WHO FAVOR DOMESTIC REFORM ALSO POINT TO CLOSER TIES TO NATO AS VERY IMPORTANT TO THE NECESSARY REORIENTATION OF THE SPANISH MILITARY.

6. SPANISH PUBLIC OPINION, WHICH HAS NOT YET BEEN SUBJECTED TO A CAREFULLY REASONED DEBATE ON THIS ISSUE, HAS ALSO YET TO BE CAREFULLY MEASURED. A SUPERFICIAL POLL TAKEN IN THREE MAJOR CITIES IN JANUARY HAD 40 PERCENT OF THE RESPONDENTS FAVORING MEMBERSHIP, 17 PERCENT OPPOSED, AND 43 PERCENT WITH NO OPINION. (THIS COMPARED WITH PERCENTAGES OF 72-4-24 WITH RESPECT TO MEMBERSHIP IN THE EEC AND 57-24-19 WITH RESPECT TO NATO IN A SIMILAR POLL TAKEN IN JUNE OF 1975.)

7. THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPANISH OPINION WILL DEPEND ON A VARIETY OF THINGS, FOR EXAMPLE: WHETHER OR NOT SPAIN IS ABLE TO MAKE MOVES TO JOIN THE EC, THE ECONOMIC COST OF MEMBERSHIP, THE EVOLUTION OF THE SPANISH MILITARY, THE INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION, GIBRALTAR, NATO'S CONDITION (PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA) AND THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF A GAULLIST SOLUTION FOR SPAIN. AS LONG AS THE SPANISH ARMY REGARDS ITS PRINCIPAL CONCERNS TO BE INTERNAL SUBVERSION AND PROBLEMS TO SPAIN'S SOUTH

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(GIBRALTAR, CEUTA AND MELILLA, THE CANARIES, MOROCCO, AND THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN), IT WILL CONTINUE TO HARBOR SIGNIFICANT OPPOSITION.

8. THUS, PART OF OUR TASK IN MOVING TOWARD SPANISH MEMBERSHIP IN NATO WILL BE TO MAKE NATO APPEAR AN APPEALING PROSPECT FOR THE SPANISH. IMPORTANT IN THIS RESPECT WILL BE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION. AN IMPORTANT TOUCHSTONE FOR THE SPANISH MILITARY WILL BE THE NEW MILITARY PLANNING PROCESS--WHETHER THE SPANISH EFFORT WILL IN TIME BE INTEGRATED WITH THE NATO EFFORT AND NOT JUST AN OBJECT OF UNILATERAL COORDINATION BY THE U.S. THE BROAD RANGE OF OTHER MEANS TO ASSOCIATE THE SPANISH MORE CLOSELY WITH NATO OVER TIME, DEALT WITH IN OTHER MESSAGES, WILL BE IMPORTANT IN THIS RESPECT, AS WILL FINDING WAYS TO ASSIST THE SPANISH MILITARY TO INCREASE ITS PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE AND TO SUBJECT A BROADER SPECTRUM OF SPANISH LEADERS TO THE KINDS OF STRATEGIC THINKING WHICH THOSE LONG INVOLVED IN NATO AFFAIRS IN EUROPE HAVE COME TO TAKE FOR GRANTED BUT WHICH REMAIN STILL BEYOND THE DIRECT EXPERIENCE OF SO MANY PEOPLE HERE.
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